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Lesson Exemplars in Teaching Pop- Up Writing To Literature Students

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Abstract

This study assessed the effectiveness of lesson exemplars in the teaching of pop-up writing to AB English students of Cebu Technological University- Main Campus during the Academic Year 2016-2017. This study utilized the quasi- experimental research design: the lesson exemplar is the independent variable while the students' level of creativity in writing is the dependent variable. The study revealed that the entry level pop-up writing performance of the respondents was neutral in all criteria. This performance is numerically highest for story structure and lowest for creativity. Moreover, the LE1 pop-up writing performance of the respondents is good for story structure and topic development but remained neutral for language use and creativity, the LE2 popup writing performance of the respondents is good for story structure but remained neutral for language use, topic development,

and creativity, and the LE3 pop-up writing performance of the respondents is good for all four (4) criteria. The increase in LE1 pop-up writing performance of the respondents is significant for story structure and topic development but the change is negligible for language use and creativity, the increase in LE2 pop-up writing performance of the respondents is significant for story structure; yet the changes are negligible for language use, topic development, and creativity, and there were no significant differences in the LE3 pop-up writing performance. Therefore, teachers may design more learning activities that would reinforce the aspects of pop-up writing.

1. Introduction

Creative writing courses are an integral and indispensable part of university education, because they interconnect intellectual and creative exploration (Smith, 7).

In the academic setting, several actions are taken by the educators to inject creativity in subject areas which involve writing. This scenario is due to the reason that writing has become a medium of expression for the students and an avenue for them to enhance their creative psyche. Creativity on the other hand, is the ability to portray originality of ideas. It begins with a creative person using a creative process to formulate a creative or a new product. It also involves the combination of existing works, objects, and ideas in various manners for new purposes. The three essential components of creativity are the creative person, the creative product, and the creative process. Creativity then is deemed as measurable since it will be expressed through performance like writing (Kanematsu et al. 9).

In the Philippine context, language teaching is one of the major job sources since many language training centers have been established not just for Filipinos but for other nonEnglish speaking nationalities as well for them to be able to learn the English language. This industry prioritizes college

graduates who have English language-related degrees and who have higher levels of creativity which is deemed as a reflection of their higher cognition.

Moreover, the AB English students of Cebu Technological University- Main Campus are trained to be creative individuals both in speaking and in writing in order to prepare them for their future careers—language teaching is one of those. As part of that so-called 'creative training', the aforementioned students are immersed into literary analysis and creative writing activities most especially in literature classes. In the midst of these activities, there are cases that they tend to have a hard time observing the mechanics in writing. Most are dependent on articles from the internet or their own idea becomes very minimal that they cannot elaborate their topic well. Additionally, AB English students are given literary masterpieces which contain difficult words and deeper meanings which would give them a hard time in writing creatively. Thus, it is but a great challenge for educators to design guides and plans that would enhance the students' creative writing skills. Consequently, this research is conducted in order to assess the effectiveness of lesson exemplars in the teaching of pop-up writing.

2. Research Questions

This study assessed the effectiveness of lesson exemplars in the teaching of pop-up writing for World Literature to AB English students of Cebu Technological University- Main Campus during the Academic Year 2016-2017 as basis for learning activities.

Specifically, it sought to answer the following sub-problems:

1. What is the entry level performance of the students in the following aspects of pop-up writing?

2. After using the lesson exemplars, what are the performances of the students in the different aspects of pop-up writing?

3. Are there significant differences in the scores of the students between entry level performance and the scores in the 3 (three) trials and the scores among the three trials?

4. Based on the findings, what learning activities can be designed?

3. Research Method

In this study, Quasi- experimental design was utilized since it attempted to investigate causality due to high degree of control (Beaumont 8). In this study, the lesson exemplar is the independent variable while the students' level of creativity in writing is the dependent variable.

Moreover, d the researcher's observations during the conduct of the study were noted.

4. Results and Discussion

4.1 Entry Level Performance

This provides descriptive statistics of the entry level pop-up writing performance of the respondents. Data were taken from 35 students who were present in the class and completed the activity.

Table 1 Pop-up Writing Performance at the Entry Level

	Mean	**Description**
Story Structure	3.00	NEUTRAL
Language Use	2.94	NEUTRAL
Topic Development	2.91	NEUTRAL

Creativity	2.74	NEUTRAL

Legend:

1.00 – 1.80 - Very poor   3.41 – 4.20 - Good

1.81 – 2.60 - Poor   4.21 – 5.00-Very good

2.61 - 3.40 - Neutral

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As reflected in Table 1, the mean scores in all criteria are NEUTRAL and creativity score is observably lower than the other three (2.74) and story structure is the highest (3.00). However, the neutral description indicates that the pop-up writing outputs of the students were having a complete plot but the details are not clearly connected to the story. There were minimal errors in spellings, capitalizations, indentions, punctuations, inconsistency in tenses, subject verb concordance and pronoun and its antecedent. The introduction of their pop-up writing outputs was interesting; however there was no logical sequencing of ideas, and the purpose was not clearly communicated. They have given information; however only some information are new as others were already known or common that the reader could easily anticipate, and there was also a minimal usage of imagery, figurative language, and vivid detail descriptions.

In the entry level, they were not able to generate wide ideas with peer groups, and unblock unfamiliar expressions of the text which caused them not to be carried out by the text. This set-up limited their capacity to be imaginative as cited in Temizkan (Ozturk, 937) which indicates that giving time to students for generating idea and encouraging students to study with their peer groups provides positive effect for their creative writing skill.

In addition, the writing activity was also conducted in an interruption-prone classroom as there were distracting commotions from adjacent rooms or even from their very own seatmate as they were seated too close from each other. This is another factor which limited their psychological preparation in writing as supported by Rubin cited in (Temizkan, 937) as he stated that students needed class environment where they could feel psychological confidence and concentration for creative writing.

Furthermore, some of the students were not able to read the story even if they were instructed to read ahead. This is also one of the factors which affect their writing performance as it is essential that they become a great reader if their purpose is to become a good writer (Morley,

7). The strong connection between reading and writing still exists. The best writers in most classrooms also tend to be avid readers. Students will access many more words when reading by themselves, and it is the independent act of reading that is the most beneficial to writing.

4.2 Performances After Using The Lesson Exemplars

Three (3) more pop-up writing performances were measured. Different lesson exemplars were used for instruction. In this section, the writing performances of the respondents are described and interpreted to determine if there are some changes in values as compared to entry level pop-up writing performance.

4.2.1 Lesson Exemplar 1 This provides descriptive statistics of the pop-up writing performance of the respondents after Lesson Exemplar 1 has been delivered. The lesson exemplar utilized the literary text "Pyramus and Thisbe" by Ovid. The text was used as a medium in order for the students to produce a pop-up writing out from it. The 5Es of a constructivist lesson plan model was observed.

Table 2   Pop-up Writing Performance after Lesson Exemplar 1

	Mean	**Description**
Story Structure	3.90	GOOD
Language Use	3.00	NEUTRAL
Topic Development	3.57	GOOD
Creativity	3.27	NEUTRAL

It can be gleaned from the table that, story structure (3.90) is still the criterion where the students are best at. Improvement can also be seen in both topic development and creativity. The good description for story structure indicates that the plot of their pop-up writing outputs was complete; however the conclusion was not that strong and compelling. However, there is no noticeable improvement for language use. While the good description for topic development indicated that, there was an interesting and effective introduction in their pop-up writing which relate the main idea, there were also logical sequencing of ideas, depth of thought and ability to communicate clearly on purpose as the pop-up writing does not wander. Even if the creativity criterion has a neutral description, it has a noticeable increase in its mean.

The results imply that Lesson Exemplar 1 had helped low-scorers for story structure, topic development, and creativity; constructive pre-writing activities employed in lesson exemplar 1 – brainstorming and role playing are effective as supported by Kirmizi (97) as she contended that sharing of various ideas plays a vital role in the formation of creative ideas. Karagiorgi and Symeou also contended that the person would learn very little if he had to depend exclusively on his own resources; one should interact with peers in order to threaten their misconceptions in order to accommodate a new concept since learners are capable of cognitive restructuring (19).

4.2.2 Lesson Exemplar 2 This provides descriptive statistics of the pop-up writing performance of the respondents after Lesson Exemplar 2 has been delivered. The lesson exemplar utilized the literary text "Rape Fantasies" by Atwood. The text was used as a medium in order for the students to produce a pop-up writing out from it. The 5Es of a constructivist lesson plan model was observed.

Table 3   Pop-up Writing Performance after Lesson Exemplar 2

	Mean	Description
Story Structure	3.52	GOOD
Language Use	3.00	NEUTRAL
Topic Development	3.28	NEUTRAL
Creativity	3.14	NEUTRAL

There are noticeable little improvements of the mean scores in each of the four criteria. Story structure (3.52) remains to be the highest scored criterion, still with good description; while language use remained to be the lowest (3.00). Language use scored to be the lowest criterion; yet it has been observed that errors committed are similar to the errors in prior pop-up writing outputs which mean that it can be gradually rectified once feedbacks are given.

However, in this study, the respondents were not given an immediate feedback to avoid repercussions as supported by Truscott cited in (Maleki & Eslami, 1255) that giving direct feedback has probable repercussions on learners' capability to write; indirect error correction causes either more or equal levels of accuracy in the long run. Moreover, some feel inadequate due to old associations with being a writer or student. Though creativity in writing is the ultimate goal, it would be inevitable that students would be anxious on grammatical errors which they believed could affect their grades.

A creative writing is favorably achieved when there is no teacher with a stern correcting pen and no requirements of proper structure, form or grammar; and it can be done in different places with different materials and at any time of day or night (Bolton, 24).

4.2.3 Lesson Exemplar 3   This provides descriptive statistics of the pop-up writing performance of the respondents after Lesson Exemplar 3 has been delivered. The lesson exemplar utilized the literary text "Lottery Ticket" by Calderon. The text was used as a medium in order for the students to produce a pop-up writing out from it. The 5Es of a constructivist lesson plan model was observed.

Table 4   Pop-up Writing Performance after Lesson Exemplar 3

	Mean	**Description**
Story Structure	3.66	GOOD
Language Use	3.48	GOOD
Topic Development	3.52	GOOD
Creativity	3.41	GOOD

It can be gleaned from the tables 2 and 3 that of the three (3) lesson exemplars, Lesson Exemplar 3 appears to have given the most noticeable improvement in all four (4) criteria. The verbal descriptions are now all GOOD with significant increases as compared to the entry level statistics. Story structure (3.66) still stands as the highest scored criterion while creativity (3.41) is the lowest. For the good description of language use criterion, it indicates that the pop-up writing outputs of the respondents surprised the reader with unusual associations, break conventions, thwarts expectation; however have no added interesting tidbits, imagery, figurative language, and vivid detailed descriptions. While for the good description in the language use criterion, it indicates that there were

minimal inconsistency in tenses, subject verb concordance, and pronoun and its antecedent in their pop up writing outputs.

The results imply that students' pop-up writing performance is affected by the imaginative and collaborative pre-writing activities. This is supported by Bhattacharjee (67) as she stated that constructivist approach works best as students have an avenue to compare and share their ideas with others; learning occurs as students attempt to resolve conflicting ideas as they vocalize their knowledge and to discover different views from others.

Creativity remains lowest, because it has been observed in their writing that they tend to tell the events, personalities, and appearances of the characters instead of showing through using strong verbs or adjectives, sensory words, and figurative language. Supposed, the more senses a writer uses throughout a piece of personal story writing, the more he or she can bring that memory alive for the reader. And when writing fiction, writers use the five senses to bring scenes and characters alive as if they were genuine. Hale contended that using figurative language and sensory words makes a work more remarkable and creative; combining two senses in a sentence provides a more concentrated, multidimensional image for the reader. (22). Harper added that evoking setting and sensory details enables readers to dwell within the fictional walls of the story from its opening pages. When a writer draws on all five senses, setting and details tend to achieve more cohesion by working in concert with one another (15).

It was also observed that they tend to inculcate sermons as a way of ending their stories especially that they were locked in to the theme of the scaffolding literary text. According to Harper, many inexperienced fiction writers begin with thematic abstractions, rather than character or image, and this inverted process often dooms the short story to work as a soapbox or pulpit from which the

writer can espouse various beliefs and theories. As one might expect, the end result is usually about

as exciting as a sermon or a speech; thus loosing the vigor and creativity of the story (12).

4.3   Significant Differences between the Entry Level Performance and Lesson Exemplar

Performance

This section shows comparison of mean pop-up writing performances in the entry level and

each of the three (3) lesson exemplars.

4.3.1 Entry VS LE1 Pop-up Writing Performance This provides an analysis on comparing

the mean pop-up writing performance of the respondents in entry level and Lesson Exemplar 1

[LE1] pop-up writing.

Table 5 Comparison of Entry Level and LE 1 Pop-up Writing Performance

.		Mean	Significance (2-tailed)	Significant?
Story Structure	ENTRY	2.96	0.029	YES
	LE1	4.00		
Language Use	ENTRY	2.96	0.870	NO
	LE1	2.91		
Topic Development	ENTRY	2.74	0.041	YES
	LE1	3.57		
Creativity	ENTRY	2.61	0.052	NO
	LE1	3.26		

It has been seen in Table 5 that LE1 pop-up writing performance appear to be higher than in

the entry level except with language use. In the descriptive statistics, there are observable increases

in the mean scores for story structure, topic development, and creativity. The results show that there are no significant differences in language use (p=0.870) and creativity (p=0.052). But, significant changes were detected for story structure (p=0.029) and topic development (p=0.041). Rechecking the mean scores from the previous table, it is certain that the mean scores have largely increased. Hence, it is found that LE1 increased pop-up writing performance for story structure and topic development.

The results imply that low scorers in the Entry Level specifically in story structure and topic development were helped by the LE1. In LE1, the literary text used is centered on the concept of forbidden love which is very apparent in reality and is also very timely for them as teenagers; thus it has been observed that there was a strong interaction and developing the topic does not seem enigmatic for them as supported by Bhattacharjee (67) that students learn best when they are allowed to construct a personal understanding based on their timely experience and to reflect on those. Additionally, cultural values and historic occurrences is embedded in short stories which enables human beings to synthesize and comprehend similar experiences and emotions (Harper, 10). Singleton also emphasized that creative writing should be as natural as reminiscing a childhood memory which would carry you along. Start a piece of writing from familiar territory (120).Besides, the video clip about forbidden love that was also presented as an engaging activity in LE1 also created vigor in students' imagination as Bhattarcharjee (70) explained that visual context brings another sense into the learning experience.

4.3.2 Entry VS LE 2 Pop-up Writing Performance This provides an analysis on comparing the mean pop-up writing performance of the respondents in entry level and Lesson Exemplar 2 [LE2] pop-up writing.

Table 6   Comparison of Entry Level and in LE2 Pop-up Writing Performance

		Mean	Significance (2-tailed)	Sig.?
Story Structure	ENTRY	3.17	0.034	YES
	LE2	3.74		
Language Use	ENTRY	3.09	0.814	NO
	LE2	3.13		
Topic Development	ENTRY	3.04	0.201	NO
	LE2	3.39		
Creativity	ENTRY	3.00	0.228	NO
	LE2	3.26		

The mean scores for LE2 are generally larger than entry level popup writing for those respondents who were both in entry level and LE2 pop-up writing. The biggest improvement is seen in story structure whose verbal description changed from NEUTRAL to GOOD. The results show that there is a significant difference in the mean score pop-up writing performance for story structure (p=0.034) but the differences in language use (p=0.814), topic development (p=0.201), and creativity (p=0.228) are negligible.

Thus, LE2 has significantly improved the story structure of the pop-up writing performance of the respondents.

The results imply that low scorers in the Entry Level specifically in story structure were helped by the LE2. The improvement in story structure prevailed since they explored the plot of the literary text which gives them structural scaffolding. The exploration plot of the literary text was done with

their peers and there was less input from the teacher; rather the teacher only gave cues for them to organize their idea. This is supported by Zareen et.al (41-42) as they stated that the learner seems to function best with high structure, using teacher-provided cues, specific explanations, and organizing strategies to make sense of the queries, and to engage in its answers; as the learner progresses, he or she needs less scaffolding; the goal is to fade gradually, to turn over the entire process to the learner, so that he or she becomes self-regulating.

4.3.3 Entry VS LE 3 Pop-up Writing Performance This provides an analysis on comparing the mean pop-up writing performance of the respondents in Entry level and Lesson Exemplar 3 [LE3] pop-up writing.

Table 7 Comparison of Entry Level and LE 3 Pop-up Writing Performance

		Mean	**Significance (2-tailed)**	**Significant?**
Story Structure	ENTRY	3.22	0.118	NO
	LE3	3.70		
Language Use	ENTRY	3.13	0.095	NO
	LE3	3.52		
Topic Development	ENTRY	3.13	0.102	NO
	LE3	3.61		
Creativity	ENTRY	3.04	0.107	NO
	LE3	3.43		

There were increases in the mean pop-up writing performance from entry level to LE3. Although there were changes in the mean scores, results show that these changes were not significant in all four

(4) criteria. Thus, it can be said that LE3 has not significantly improved the pop-up writing

performance of the respondents who were in the entry level and LE3 pop-up writing.

This result implies that LE3 should be modified in order to improve the pop-up writing performance of the respondents. Sharma contended that modification should foster more engaging pre-writing activities as well as the relatable literary text since the brain is assumed to be selective in receiving information; if the pre-writing activities and the scaffolding literary text are not relatable for the students, student's imaginative ability will certainly decline (13). Bucu also stated that a good teacher must simply work the student into such a state of interest that other superseding object of attention shall be banished from his mind and that he would sustain curiosity on what you want them to learn; the teacher can take advantage of this natural curiosity to motivate learners by making sure that his or her teaching strategies and instructional materials are occasionally new, different, challenging and with element of excitement (70).

Furthermore, during the conduct of the study the students were tensed since they were given time limits as top-heavy seriousness can create a very disabling tension and creative constipation (Morley, 13).

4.4 Significant Differences among Lesson Exemplars

In order to tell the difference in the pop-up writing performance of the respondents in the three (3) lesson exemplars, the means of the three groups of data were analyzed and compared.

Table 8   Comparison of the Pop-up Writing Performance in the three LEs

		Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.

Story Structure	Between Groups	2.223	2	1.111	.759	.471
	Within Groups	124.493	85	1.465		
	Total	126.716	87			
Development	Groups	82.401	85	.969		
	Within Groups	83.818	87			
	Total					
Creativity	Between Groups	1.105	2	.553	.778	.462
	Within Groups	60.349	85	.710		
	Total	61.455	87			
Language Use	Between Groups	4.531	2	2.266	2.952	.058
	Within Groups	65.241	85	.768		
	Total	69.773	87			
Topic	Between	1.417	2	.709	.731	.484

W ith

$p \geq 0.0$

5   in all criteri a, there is no significant difference in the pop-up writing performance among the three (3) lesson exemplars. This means that the effects of the lesson exemplars to the pop-up writing performance of the students are not significantly different from each other. During the conduct of the study, the teacher was locked in by the lesson exemplars and did not attempt to meet the needs of the

learners even if there were apparent deficiencies in the learning situation which need to be promptly addressed before proceeding to the next lesson; thus, there is no any improvement of the performance among the three (3) lesson exemplars as supported by Tan (35) as he emphasized that there may be a need to put aside the lesson plan to meet an emergency or to take advantage of a learning situation.

Furthermore, the (3) lesson exemplars are all employing a constructive approach where the teacher tried to draw out certain bits of information through properly organized questions and explanations leading them to the eventual discovery of particular concepts or principles. Creative presentations like role playing, simulating, picture painting were the utilized techniques in the (3) lesson exemplars. In Kirmizi's study which aimed to identify the effect of creative drama and creative writing activities on creative writing achievement, it is concluded that it is possible to make writing that is usually perceived as boring activity by students interesting by using a set of activities and practices as these can increase students' motivation to write (Kirmizi, 93); while in Temizkan's study which aimed to determine the effect of creative writing activities on the skill of university students in writing story genre text, it was revealed that there is a significant difference between the pre-test and the post-test results (Temizkan, 933).

Note that in the (3) lesson exemplars, story structure is consistent to be the criterion where the students are best at. The literary texts used in all of the exemplars served as a guide for students to develop a good story structure as they will already have an idea on how to express their purpose and to arrange ideas in a whole pattern of thought. The reading material also deals with the choice of words and linguistic manipulation of the sentences in order to make the material interesting and thought provoking (Tan, 5); thus, the students tend to mimic the writing styles of the author.

Moreover, a reader brings expectations about genre to a piece of writing; these are shaped by previous reading of similar works. On a simple level –if the reader read a short story, he or she may shape his or her own short story out from it (Neale, 4). Robert Brooke argued that the danger lies in what images of authorship and writer they are receiving: writers learn to write by imitating other writers (Bishop & Starkey, 17).

While for creativity criterion, it is believed that the students know that there is a discrepancy between their intended story content and the amount of underlying information they had. They wanted the story to be produced as they imagined; yet some factors hindered them and one of those factors is typically the knowledge of language equivalent. (Graves cited in Bishop & Starkey, 23).

5. Conclusion And Recommendations

Constructive approach in teaching pop-up writing or the allowing of learners to construct personal interpretation of experiences affected their performance mostly in the aspect of story structure as they were guided with the structure of the literary text which was read and comprehended collaboratively. However, meeting the standards of language use, topic development and creativity are observably an intertwining dilemma for the respondents upon producing a pop-up writing where if one finds it hard to seek for expressions that would equate their actual imagination or their intended story content, creativity and topic development will certainly be suppressed. Therefore, lesson exemplars in teaching pop-up writing which employ constructive approach are effective particularly in story structure criterion. In view of the findings and conclusions, it is recommended that teachers may use the output of this study or may design more learning activities that would reinforce the aspects of pop-up writing especially language use, topic development and creativity, they may help students to like their writing by creating judgment-free zones and by encouraging them to write in low-risk

environments, using free writing; proper grammar may not be considered as the primary concern of the teachers since it can create an anxiety to the students; they will just learn it in the long run; in conducting a creative writing activity, an incredibly freeing environment may be provided and duration of writing should be maximized to minimize disabling tensions; and it is highly recommended that a replication of this study in other schools shall be conducted in order to revalidate the findings.

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